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DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

October 10, 2011

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen;

This letter is to confirm your invitation to attend and participate in a meeting to discuss the possibility of additional IDWR intervention into Water District 34 water accounting and management issues.

The meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday, October 27, 2011 @ 2:00 p.m. at the Business Incubation Center (BIC) in Arco, Idaho.**

Also, please find enclosed a discussion paper we have prepared as a starting point for the meeting. You are welcome to call us if you have any questions you would like to ask prior to the meeting.

Thank you for your attendance,



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enclosure

DISCUSSION PAPER

---revised and prepared for the Oct. 27, 2011 meeting---

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Idaho Department of Water Resources
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RE: IDWR Intervention in Water District 34 Accounting and Water Management

Preface

Basin 34 has a long history of water controversy and disputes. In recent decades, state officials have expended substantial time and effort to provide a framework for better management of the water resources in Water District 34. These efforts have resulted in some improvements, but certain water users, and more particularly, some local entities and authorities give little deference to IDWR rules and guidelines. The result is a type of social harassment generally expressed in the form of an adversarial protest, objection, petition, complaint, or board decision directed towards those who are viewed as being of an inferior minority status, politically incorrect, or geographically different.

Purpose

The purpose of this discussion is to explore the possibility of IDWR intervention into the operational duties and responsibilities of Water District 34. To ask and begin answering the following questions:

- 1.) Should the Director assert more of his statutory authority in water management, accounting, and distribution?
- 2.) How much intervention is needed to ensure water entitlements are protected and the water resource is used in a conservative and optimal manner?
- 3.) What is the likelihood that intervention will reduce disputes and provide a more stable socio-economic environment?
- 4.) If any more intervention is provided, how long should it be asserted and how will it be paid for?

Suggestions

- 1.) Meet with local water users and committee(s) to develop a short (1-3 year) and long (3-10 year) term business plan for Water District 34.
- 2.) Continue the formation and implementation of a water accounting system that is independent of all other water distribution entities.
- 3.) Appoint a (non-local-impartial) water master that is well versed in the SRBA partial decrees, IDWR promulgated rules, guidelines and instructions.
- 4.) Hire (local-impartial) deputies that are answerable to such a water master and IDWR officials, not local political or partisan interests.
- 5.) Encourage and provide for the formation and operation of lateral associations when requested by water users.
- 6.) Modify the annual water district budget to accommodate the level of intervention that is ultimately decided on.